

SENATE BILL SB-45

Introduced by Senator John Laird (D-17)

An act relating to Ag-Tech and Coastal Resilience Infrastructure Act.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB-45, John Laird (D-17). Ag-Tech and Coastal Resilience Infrastructure Act.

This bill would establish the Central Coast Ag-Tech and Coastal Resilience Grant and Tax Credit Program within GO-Biz, in consultation with the Department of Food and Agriculture. The program would provide competitive grants, matching funds, and expedited administrative permitting frameworks to qualified businesses deploying advanced agricultural technology, precision irrigation automation, supply chain modernization, and climate-resilient food-processing infrastructure

Vote: Majority. Appropriations/fiscal: yes. Local program: yes.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025-2026 SIMULATION SESSION

SENATE BILL

NO.

Introduced by Senator Laird

September 30, 2026

An Act to Add Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 13999) to Part 4.5 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, relating to economic development, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB #, Laird. Central Coast Ag-Tech & Coastal Resilience Infrastructure Act.

This bill would establish the Central Coast Ag-Tech and Coastal Resilience Grant and Tax Credit Program within GO-Biz, in consultation with the Department of Food and Agriculture. The program would provide competitive grants, matching funds, and expedited administrative permitting frameworks to qualified businesses deploying advanced agricultural technology, precision irrigation automation, supply chain modernization, and climate-resilient food-processing infrastructure

This bill would prioritize project deployments and workforce training partnerships located within Senate District 17 (encompassing portions of Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, and San Luis Obispo counties) to safeguard critical

agricultural production lines, regional supply chains, and coastal marine research assets against labor shortages and climate disruptions.

This bill would make findings and declarations related thereto and would appropriate funds from the General Fund to GO-Biz for the administration and implementation of the grant program.

Existing law establishes the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) to serve as the lead entity for economic strategy and marketing of California. Existing law also provides various tax credits and incentive programs to encourage business growth, technological innovation, and sustainable practices.

Vote: Majority Appropriations: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 13999) is added to Part 4.5 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, to read:

CHAPTER 7.5. Central Coast Ag-Tech & Coastal Resilience Infrastructure Act

13999. This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the Central Coast Ag-Tech & Coastal Resilience Infrastructure Act.

13999.1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) California's agricultural and coastal economies are foundational to the economic vitality, food security, and global competitiveness of the state.
- (b) Regions such as the Central Coast face unprecedented pressures from changing climatic conditions, water scarcity, regulatory burdens, and global supply chain vulnerabilities.
- (c) Fostering public-private partnerships, accelerating the deployment of precision ag-tech, and modernizing food-processing and logistics infrastructure will drive statewide economic growth while preserving critical local ecosystems and employment bases.

13999.2. For purposes of this chapter:

- (a) "Board" means the GO-Biz Advisory Board or a designated grant evaluation panel established pursuant to this chapter.
- (b) "Department" means the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz).
- (c) "Eligible entity" means a commercial enterprise, agricultural cooperative, food-processing facility, or research institution operating within the State of California, with priority project deployment focus in qualifying regional corridors.
- (d) "Qualifying Regional Corridor" includes Senate District 17 and adjacent regional production zones heavily reliant on agricultural and coastal economic output.

13999.3.

(a) The Central Coast Ag-Tech and Coastal Resilience Grant and Tax Credit Program is hereby established within GO-Biz.

(b) The program shall provide financial assistance, matching grants, and administrative streamlining to eligible entities that deploy:

(1) Artificial intelligence or automated robotics for crop management, harvesting, and precision water conservation.

(2) Carbon-neutral and energy-efficient cold-chain logistics, packaging, and food-processing technologies.

(3) Advanced marine and coastal monitoring systems designed to protect local fisheries, ports, and ag-industrial infrastructure.

(c) GO-Biz, in consultation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), shall develop guidelines to prioritize grant distribution to projects that establish technical training pipelines in partnership with regional educational institutions (such as community colleges and state universities within District 17).

13999.4.

(a) Participating state agencies shall, to the maximum extent permitted by federal and state law, establish expedited environmental review and permitting pathways for pilot projects certified under this chapter.

(b) The program shall report annually to the Legislature on economic outputs, technological adoption rates, and resource conservation metrics achieved by grant recipients.

SECTION 2.

The sum of \$15,000,000\$ is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) for the purpose of administering Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 13999) of Part 4.5 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, as added by Section 1 of this act.